



Africa RISING East and Southern Africa Project Steering Committee Meeting 13 September 2017 Zanzibar, Tanzania

Minutes of Meeting (amended version – 27-02-2019)

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Present

1. Victor Manyong, Chair - IITA
2. Irmgard Hoeschle-Zeledon, Secretary - IITA
3. Carlo Azzarri, IFPRI (attending via Skype)
4. Brian Isabirye, ASARECA
5. Felix Chipojola, Ministry of Agriculture Malawi
6. Adebisi Araba, CIAT
7. Mateete Bekunda, IITA
8. Jonathan Odhong', IITA

Agenda

1. Welcome of PSC members, introduction and adoption of agenda
2. Review and approval of minutes from last meeting
3. Matters arising and follow up on action points from previous meeting
4. Reflection of PSC members on Africa RISING achievements based on day 1 and 2 presentations
5. Project funding situation and way forward
6. PSC membership
7. Any Other Business

The meeting started at 07:30 am. Victor Manyong chaired the meeting.

Minute	Issue/ discussions	Action taken & responsible person (s)
Agenda 1 Welcome of PSC members, introduction and adoption of agenda	Manyong welcomed members and thanked them for accepting to hold the meeting very early. Members then introduced themselves and then went ahead to review the agenda for the meeting. The agenda was adopted as had been circulated. Isabirye proposed the motion to adopt and was seconded by Bekunda.	
Agenda 2 Review and approval of minutes from last meeting	Members reviewed minutes of the previous meeting, it was noted that the name of committee member Isabirye had been misspelt. No other changes were deemed necessary. Araba moved the motion to adopt, seconded by Zeledon.	Secretary to correct spelling error for the name of committee member Isabirye.
Agenda 3 Matters arising and follow up on action points from previous meeting.	Zeledon reported that a local site coordinator to assist the Kongwa - Kiteto team leader had been recruited, but still the situation and the challenges raised in the previous meeting had persisted because the staff recruited didn't have any authority. All decisions still had to be made by the team leader who is based in Malawi. Also, ICRISAT (represented by Carberry at the previous meeting) had reported that a groundnut breeder will be recruited by the institute in Malawi and this was expected to help free-up the time for the Kongwa - Kiteto team leader to also focus more on Africa RISING, but this also seems not to have taken place.	Members discussed and agreed that the best course of action considering the uncertain future of the project would be to not take any action immediately. Keep working with the current Kongwa - Kiteto team leader (for all reporting correspondence), at least until the future becomes clear. PSC members also advised that the Kongwa - Kiteto site coordinator should be encouraged to always copy the Chief Scientist on the draft reports sent to the team leader.

	<p>Azzarri reported that the paper on minimum data requirements was prepared, shared with project partners and their feedback included in a revised version that has now been published in the Wiki. It was however noted by members that such a document, if already final should be uploaded to the CG Space. Azzari further reported that one of the challenges faced by the team now was how to ensure full implementation of the document by partners considering that the M&E coordinator had resigned and a replacement couldn't be hired due to the funding cuts.</p> <p>Bekunda reported that neither of the action points had been implemented – preparation of a document to guide farmer selection for AR in phase 2 and preparation of a document explaining how farmer selection was done in phase 1. He further explained that this was not an easy task considering AR was a systems R-in-D project with different disciplines that require separate farmer selection criteria. Furthermore, the strategic approach for the project in phase 2 was quite different to the one used in phase 1.</p> <p>Azzarri briefed members that the approaches chosen by Carberry and his team at IFPRI were different and so no collaboration was established. He also informed members that his team had proceeded with their (proposal) and were working in Zambia now to document the success of Africa RISING technologies as the first case study. This work is also basically intersecting with the typology work to ex-ante simulations across typologies as well. The output of the work will be to document the performance of Africa RISING innovations, where they have the highest potentials and the influencing factors. Completion of this work is tentatively December 2017.</p>	<p>Azzarri, Bekunda and Zeledon to discuss and agree on the final document after which the final version to be shared with Odhong for upload on CG Space.</p> <p>Bekunda to coordinate with the project partners and lead them in generating a document describing the criteria used by each of them to select farmers in phase 1. Preparation of document on farmer selection criteria for phase 2 to be put on hold as the team monitors how the funding situation unfolds. However, priority be given to documentation of the legacy technologies for the project in phase 1.</p> <p>The PSC noted that commendable progress had been made by the IFPRI team led by Azzarri. Members also noted that it was important that the newly recruited project farming systems specialist (Lieven Claessens) should be involved in this work. Azzarri to organize a meeting to push this work forward together with Claessens.</p>
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	<p>Zeledon and Bekunda reported that the team meetings were still not regular despite the reminder given during the previous review and planning meeting. Some improvement was noted for the Babati Research Team.</p> <p>Zeledon reported that she had replaced DADOs and AEDOs by District Assembly in the final version of her report on Malawi partners.</p> <p>Zeledon reported that an analysis of project staff had been done and one of the main conclusions was that the project required a farming systems specialist. Recruitment for this position has been done and the staff is now on board.</p> <p>Zeledon reported that the proposal was finalized, sent to the donor and it was eventually approved.</p> <p>Zeledon and Manyong reported that a letter had been sent to COSTECH regarding their attendance to the steering committee. A staff from COSTECH was nominated (Ms. Flora), but since then she has left COSTECH. The COSTECH DG nominated another staff who has not been responsive.</p> <p>Regarding USAID membership to the PSC, Zeledon briefed members that after discussions with Jerry Glover, a decision had been reached that there will be no more USAID presence in the Steering Committee going forward.</p>	<p>Zeledon to give a reminder for the team leaders as part of the feedback from the steering committee at the end of the meeting. The teams should be encouraged to <u>meet as regularly as possible and take minutes of discussions which should be uploaded to the project wiki</u>. Team leaders should also be encouraged to explore other means of closer collaboration like WhatsApp groups.</p> <p>Manyong to approach the Director of Policy and Planning at Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (Mrs. Simkanga) after the project situation has stabilized (March 2018). Zeledon to draft a letter of invitation to this effect. COSTECH membership will be kept, but no further reminders to be sent about representation in the PSC.</p>
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<p>Agenda 4 Reflection of PSC members on Africa RISING achievements based on days 1 and 2 presentations.</p>	<p>Isabirye – There is quite a lot of work done and if you listen from a neutral point, then we’ve done quite well. There are still challenges in terms of reporting. It seems the teams have done much more than they have reported/documented. The teams also still lack some cohesion, even within the same site you still get a sense of teams working at cross purposes and not collaborating as expected.</p> <p>Araba – There is increased interest within the CGIAR on site collaboration/integration and Africa RISING presents a strong template for this. The feedback I have from CIAT scientists is that they are very excited about this project and that the camaraderie is very strong within the team. This is something that should be documented very well.</p> <p>Chipojola – I found the work on the book chapters to be very relevant. However, there are still some issues with the “borrowed” technologies in which we have not yet clearly defined the “value add” of Africa RISING on these. It was also clear that Africa RISING is contributing quite a lot to the science domain. All throughout I didn’t hear any presentation on the emerging diseases like Maize Lethal Necrosis Disease which the project worked on at some point.</p> <p>Bekunda – This was not meant to be a real scientific meeting, we are now trying to wear two hats: of a scientist and a development partner. We still need the peer reviewed publications, but I believe they are in the pipeline. My worry is that I may not have an incentive with which to encourage the teams to write considering present funding situation. Before we got the news for the budget cuts we had funds for engagement with development partners but the Malawi and Kongwa - Kiteto teams seem not have taken this up as well as the Babati team. Now the funds are limited and we don’t have resources for that anymore, I</p>	
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	<p>hope that they can carry on the momentum regardless. The key message to share with partners is that Africa RISING is not dead! But this also needs to be accompanied by the work on the handbook. The situation is tough, but there is a chance that it will get better.</p> <p>Jonathan – overall a great meeting (so far) considering the objectives that were set and the progress. There is richness in what has been presented for the past two days. It is clear that different teams/partners are at different levels in how they are able to describe the technologies, but I believe that considering the content presented there should be a good output from this work.</p> <p>Irmgard – We still have to include a few things that were funded by the project, but weren't presented on. I am impressed by the motivation and spirit of the team despite the current financial situation. I left the meeting room yesterday at 9:00 pm and some partners were still very focused and working on the output. I think we are still weak in engaging with development partners to scale our technologies. It seems to me that the teams have still not internalized the need for this.</p> <p>Manyong – I was very positively impressed by the richness of the information and the enthusiasm of the project members despite the news about the budget cuts. I would also like to appreciate the effort of the management in putting this together. It is also very good that management moved to focus on producing this book as a legacy product. This book will be made stronger if they were referring to the peer reviewed publications made so far. I see the team putting more effort going forward on the book rather than peer reviewed publications. However, as a science based project the peer reviewed publications is a key output that we should not miss too. Overall, I</p>	
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	still think this handbook will be a good legacy product.	
Agenda 5 Project funding situation and way forward	<p>Regarding the funding situation and way forward, Zeledon gave an update to the PSC members as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently the whole Africa RISING program only has a commitment from USAID of 575,000 USD that should come in by December 2017. • There is possibility of the program getting another 925,000 USD in January 2018. • These amounts are barely enough for keeping the project staff together. • The current guidance from USAID is that the project management should seek to work with the new FTF focus countries like Kenya, Uganda etc. • There is likely 100 – 150,000 USD left over funds from the previous year. • Directive from USAID is that the program should not be dissolved, but key functions maintained. <p>In addition to the update by Zeledon, Bekunda added that the project management team was in touch with the Country Missions in Tanzania and Zambia and were hoping to get some additional funds. The priority would be to as much as possible work with the teams for scaling of our research outputs.</p> <p>In response to the update by Zeledon, Isabirye suggested that it would be useful for the project management team and the PSC to start discussing what should happen in the two scenarios – if funds eventually come and if the funds don't eventually come. Some ideas are: We need to keep focused on the handbook and also keep churning out publications, but we also need to establish the other things we can do for example prepare a bridging proposal, develop a transitional work plan and a result framework etc. Anything that would ensure pro-active decision making and foresight.</p>	<p>Zeledon and Bekunda to develop a transition work plan that would be used as a basis for discussion with IITA management to proactively guide the course of the project in the next few months. This should be ready by October 2017 ahead of the meeting with Jerry Glover in November.</p>

<p>Agenda 6 PSC membership</p>	<p>Zeledon briefed members that the PSC constitution requires an annual rotation in the representation of the membership for international research centers. This therefore meant that CIAT's term in the steering committee was ending. She therefore posed a question to members whether this decision could be reviewed.</p> <p>Further to Zeledon's submission, members also discussed and made an observation that the term for international centre representatives should be revised considering that it is a bit disruptive to change members after their first attendance to the PSC and doesn't allow the members representing their institutions to participate fully in the PSC.</p> <p>Manyong excused himself and handed over leadership of the meeting to Chipojola.</p>	<p>Members agreed that the term of CIAT be extended for another one year.</p> <p>PSC members to review membership rotation rule and revise accordingly at the next meeting.</p>
<p>Agenda 6 Any Other Business</p>	<p>Manyong proposed that members carry out a self-evaluation of the PSC performance. Members reflections regarding this subject were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zeledon noted that the best/ideal response would more timely feedback on the tasks by the committee members. Participation of the Steering Committee members is also very motivating for the project management team. • Isabirye – What should we do as the steering committee members during this period /considering the circumstances? <p>Isabirye noted that it would be great for PSC members to have a document summarizing the impact of Africa RISING and its achievements for lobbying with donors. This should include the economics of each output.</p> <p>In response to the suggestion by Isabirye, Odhong' reported that this document was in</p>	<p>Members of the steering committee could help the project by actively taking up the role of helping project partners to link up with development partners. The committee can also help the project management by advising on loose ends – which ones make sense and which ones don't. Also, a possible role is for the committee is to help preach the message that AR is not dead, but also for any harsh decisions the project has to make aren't done in bad faith.</p> <p>Zeledon to share loose ends and transition plan with SC</p>

	preparation and would factor in all the Africa RISING program countries. Document expected to be finalized by end of January 2018.	
	Chipojola thanked members and closed the meeting at 10:20 am.	

Ibadan, 6 October 2017

I. Hoeschle-Zeledon (Secretary) and J. Odhong'

PSC Africa RISING East and Southern Africa Project